



# Walter Scott 1771-1832

## A Story in Scots

### Overview

Walter Scott appreciated the richness of his native language, and switched between Scots and English in his work, often presenting dialogue in Scots and narrative in English. This lesson uses a truncated version of the story 'Wandering Willie's Tale,' (which we've renamed 'A Scottish Tale') from Scott's novel *Redgauntlet* to empower pupils to engage with Scots. Pupils who are unfamiliar or not confident with Scots can develop confidence in recognising and understanding vocabulary. Pupils who speak Scots can use their knowledge and skills in the lesson, engaging directly with the story and using their language to discuss it.

### Curriculum for Excellence

This resource has been designed to connect with the following Curriculum for Excellence elements.

ENG 3-12a (also ENG 2-12a, ENG 4-12a)	Through developing my knowledge of context clues, punctuation, grammar and layout, I can read unfamiliar texts with increasing fluency, understanding and expression.	Even Scots-speaking pupils may be unfamiliar with seeing Scots written down. The nineteenth century language may also be unfamiliar to pupils. However, the structured activities will help pupils understand the text on their own terms.
LIT 3-13a	I can select and use the strategies and resources I find most useful before I read, and as I read, to monitor and check my understanding.	Before reading, pupils will do a vocabulary task, which will model one useful pre-reading strategy. During reading, questions will ensure pupils understand.
ENG 3-17a	To show my understanding, I can comment, with evidence, on the content and form of short and extended texts, and respond to literal, inferential and evaluative questions and other types of close reading tasks.	The extract is split over sixteen pages, with literal and inferential questions and other close reading tasks on every page.



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## Steps

### 1. Introducing languages

To get the pupils thinking about different languages, go through the attached PowerPoint. It starts by asking pupils which languages they speak, before showing them a packed circle diagram of the top nine most widely-spoken languages in Scotland (according to the 2011 census). Pupils are challenged to speak in as many of the languages as they can. The languages are:

- English
- Scots
- Gaelic
- BSL
- Polish
- Urdu
- Punjabi languages
- Chinese languages
- French

The next slide has discussion questions, guiding the pupils to think about the importance of keeping languages, including Scots, alive. The final slide provides a little bit of information on what they are going to read.

### 2. Vocabulary

Thirty words from the reading activity are featured in a Tarsia word puzzle. You should either cut out the shapes or ask your pupils to cut them out. In groups, the pupils should then match the Scots word to its English translation e.g. match *nae* with *no*. When all the words are matched, the puzzle should make a hexagon. You may find it useful to show them the blank hexagon so that they know what they are aiming for.

If your pupils are already speakers of Scots, you may wish to miss out this step. Alternatively, if your speakers don't know any Scots at all, you may wish to leave this step until the end of the lesson as they will work on the vocabulary words throughout the lesson.



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### 3. Reading

The story has been truncated and split into sixteen short sections. Each section is presented on one page along with some context, some understanding questions, a discussion question, and a Scots task. The context section mentions what has been cut from the original, as well as explaining some difficult words. Encourage the pupils to read this before they read the extract itself. The 16 pages are available as a PDF and as an online book.

Depending on your class, pupils can work through the readings in different ways, such as:

- You can read the context and passage as a class, ask the pupils the understanding questions, and then put them in pairs or groups to work on the discussion questions and Scots tasks.
- Ask the pupils to work through the story in pairs, answering the questions as they go.
- Ask the pupils to work through three or four pages alone and then come back as a full class or group to share their thoughts and answers for the discussion questions and Scots tasks.

### 4. Re-telling the story

A storyboard version of the story is attached. You can cut out the different parts of the storyboard and ask the pupils to put it in the right order. Then should then re-tell the story.

### 5. Writing response

Ask the pupils to write a short version of the story set in a different time or place. If they know Scots, encourage them to write in Scots.

## Trigger Warnings

The story was written for adults and features some potentially difficult subjects:

- Alcohol: characters drink throughout the story.
- Hell/the Devil/religion: characters reference the Devil and hell throughout the story. The main action of the story is that the main character goes to hell to get a receipt.



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- Bad money management/landlords: the inciting incident in this story is that the main character cannot pay their rent because he is bad at managing money. This could potentially be difficult for young people whose families are in similar situations.

### Answers

#### Page 1:

1. C. Violent and wild.
2. His tenants, his lackies, and his troopers (pupils can put this into their own words and say: the people who live on his land; the people who work for him; the people who fight with him).

#### Page 2:

1. B. He is not good at saving.
2. He borrows it from his friends, particularly a neighbour called Laurie Lapraik.
3. No, it is ill-natured.

#### Page 3:

1. He is concerned about whether Steenie has all the money.
2. They will go downstairs.
3. They will drink brandy.

#### Page 4:

1. They hear the Laird shouting.
2. The water boils.
3. The wine turns into blood.
4. Steenie runs away.

#### Page 5:

1. Hutcheon and Dougal.
2. B. They fall down.
3. Dougal dies.

#### Page 6:

1. He is asked to pay the money again.
2. It is compared to a mastiff-dog.

#### Page 7:

1. Sir John does not believe that Steenie has paid the money (pupils will have to infer this by the fact that he speaks in a sleekit tone).
2. He asks for a receipt or witness to prove that Steenie has paid the money.



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### Page 8:

1. Steenie drinks a toast to the memory of Sir Robert Redgauntlet and to the Devil.
2. The horse begins 'to spring, and flee, and sturt' (that is, to act very energetically when it had previously been tired).

### Page 9:

1. Steenie suggests that the stranger lend him the money.
2. Pupils should infer that this means that Steenie can get help from hell.
3. Steenie says that he will go to hell ('to the gate of hell, and a step farther,' means that he will enter it).
4. He says this because he is desperate and he thinks that humouring the stranger might make him lend the money.

### Page 10:

1. The building looks like Redgauntlet castle.
2. Redgauntlet castle is ten miles away.
3. There is singing, drinking, and naughty talk.

### Page 11:

1. Redgauntlet wants Steenie to play the pipes for them.
2. The pipes are really hot and would burn him (pupils may also quote 'heated to a white heat').

### Page 12:

1. Redgauntlet invites Steenie to eat and drink.
2. Redgauntlet has used the same words as Earl Douglas did before killing someone.

### Page 13:

1. Redgauntlet tells Steenie to return in one year.
2. No, Steenie refuses to do this.
3. It becomes dark and he falls unconscious onto the ground.
4. He has the receipt.

### Page 14:

1. He goes back to Redgauntlet Castle.
2. The receipt is dated the previous day (that is, after Redgauntlet died).

### Page 15:

1. Sir John does not know whether to believe Steenie's story or not.
2. Because that is where the money is.
3. He does not know where it is.

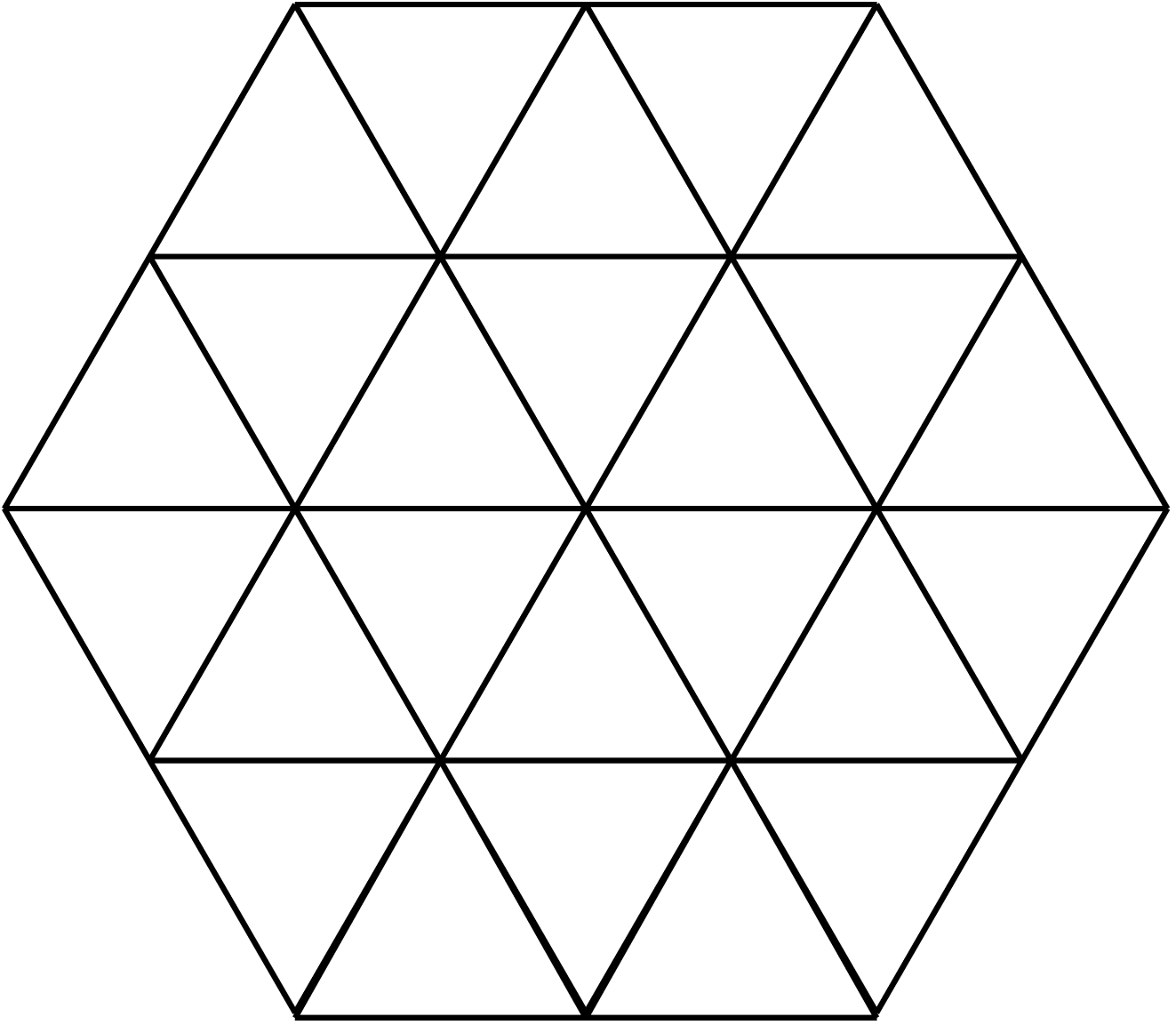
### Page 16:

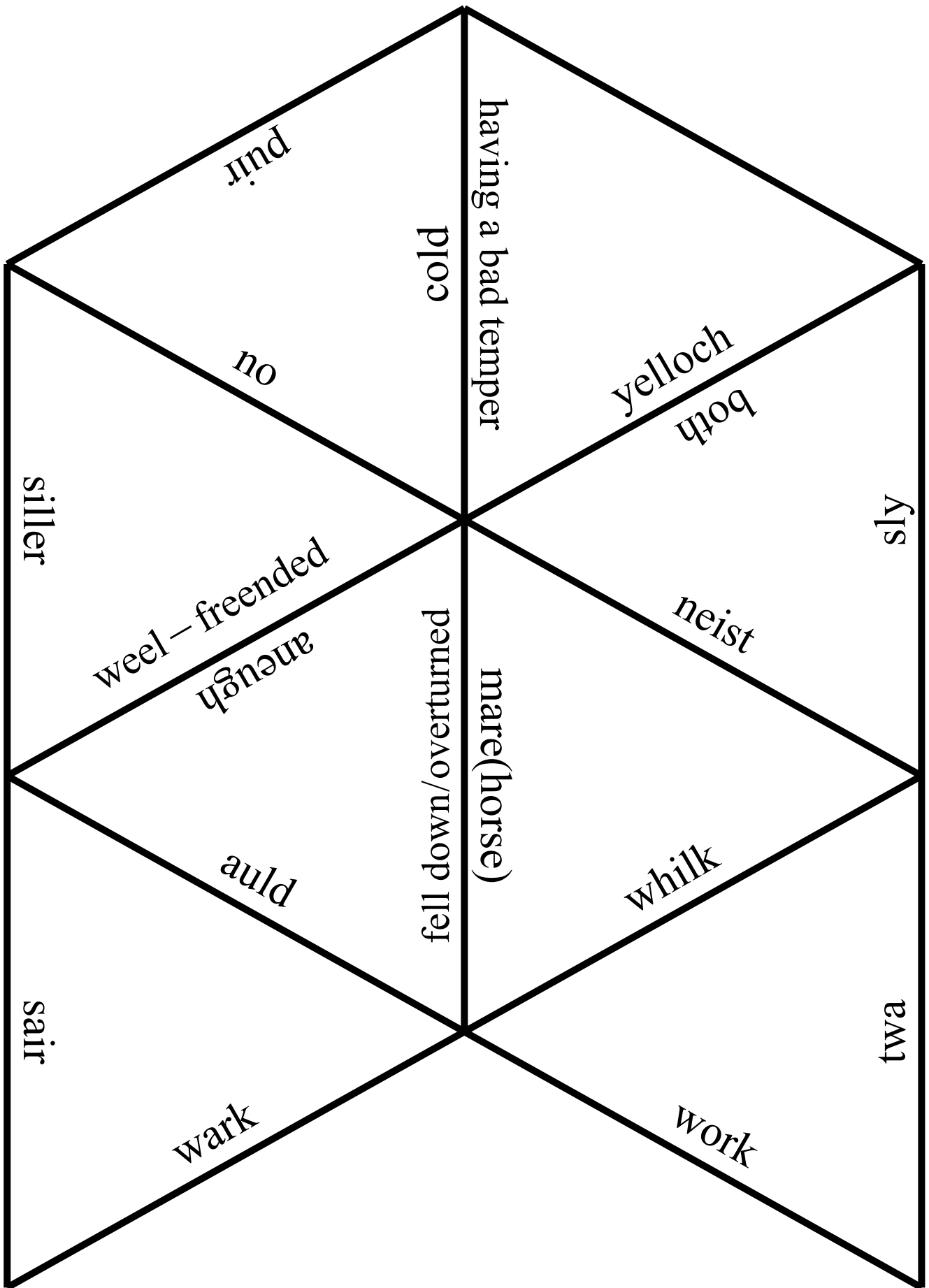
1. No, it was difficult.



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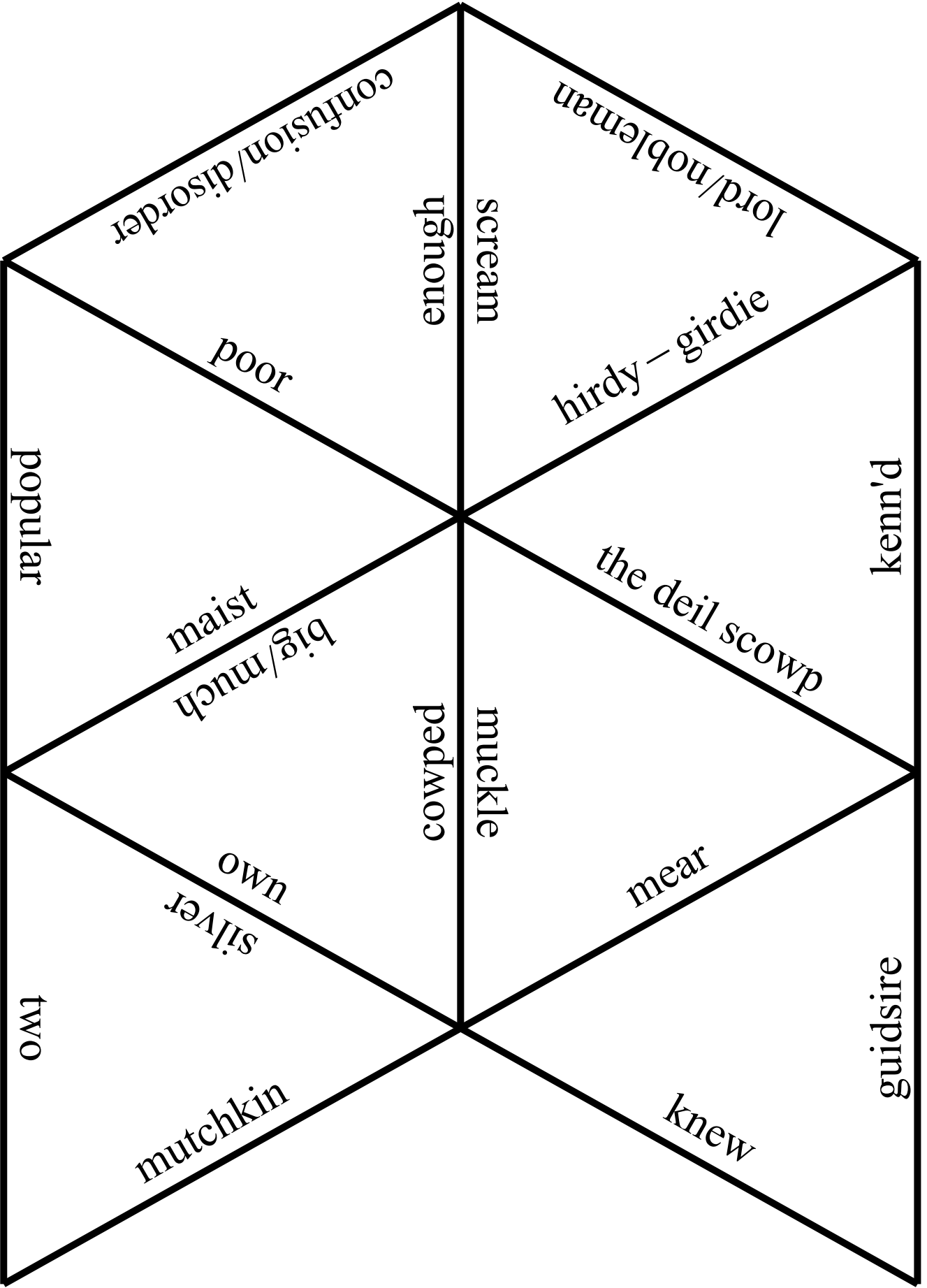
2. The ape attacks Sir John.
3. Sir John finds the money.

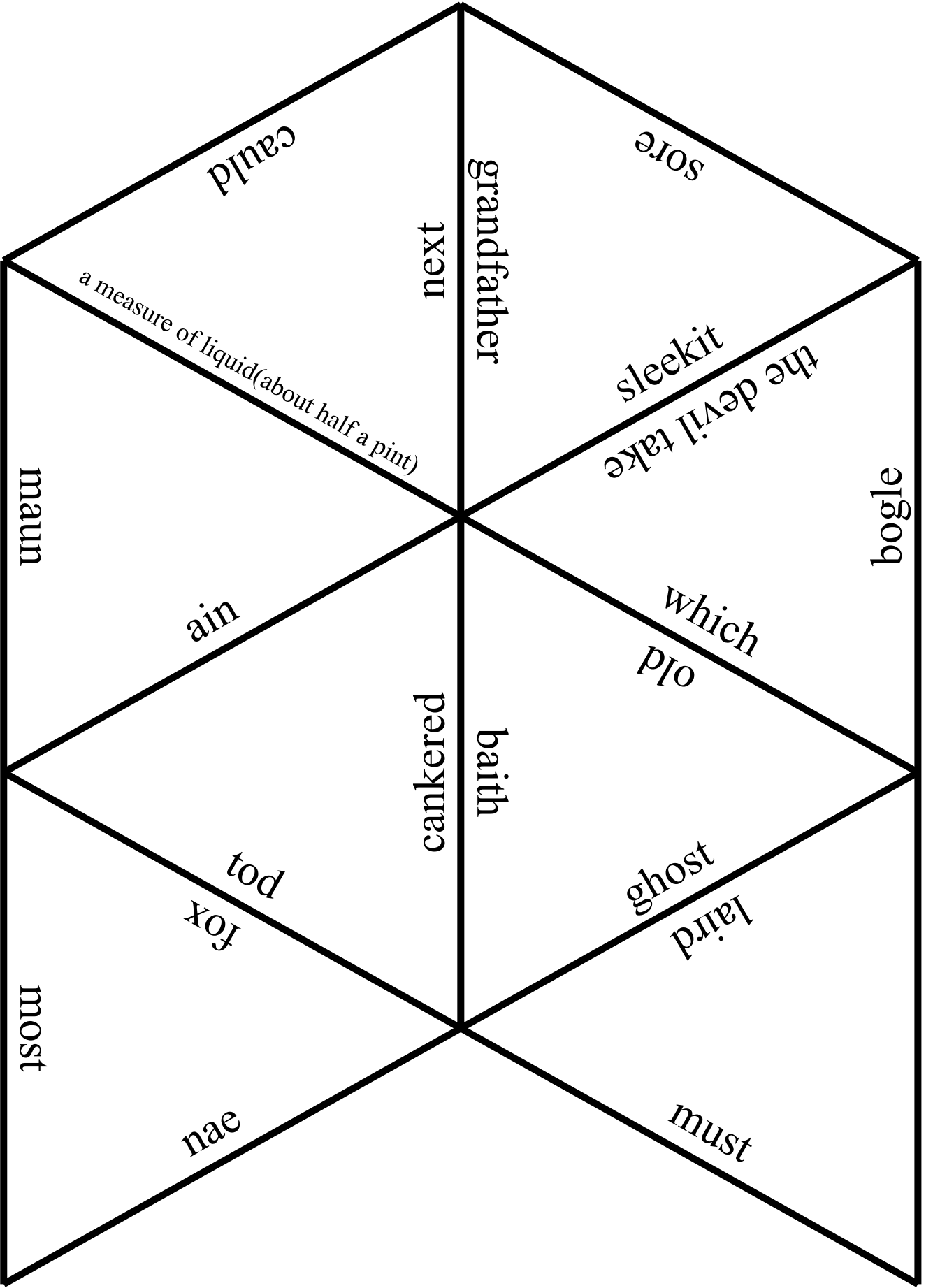


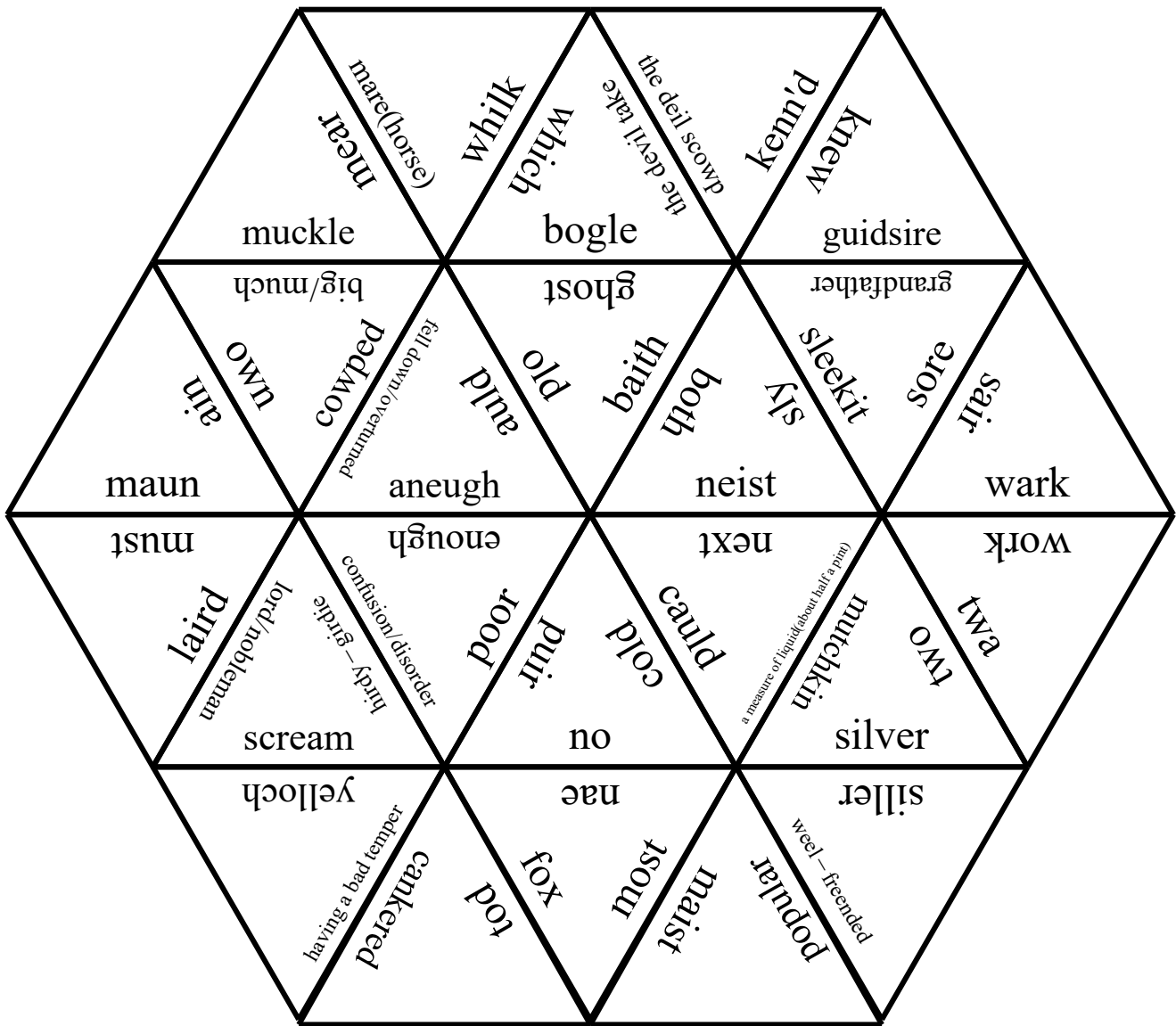


Cut up the shapes and ask the pupils to match the Scots and English words (3 pages).









The solution

## A Scottish Tale

*In Scott's novel, Redgauntlet, one of the main characters, Wandering Willie, tells this story about his grandfather, Steenie and his landlord, Redgauntlet, who lived in a time of conflict between groups including the Whigs (a political group), Covenanters (a religious group), and Cavaliers (a political/military group).*

Ye maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that Ilk, who lived in these parts... The country will lang mind him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. ... He was knighted at Lonon court, wi' the king's ain sword; and being a redhot prelatist, he came down here, rampaung like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy, and of lunacy, for what I ken, to put down a' the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. Wild wark they made of it; for the Whigs were as dour as the Cavaliers were fierce, and it was which should first tire the other. Redgauntlet was ay for the strong hand.... Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave, could hide the puir hill-folk when Redgauntlet was out with bugle and bloodhound after them, as if they had been sae mony deer. And troth when they fand them, they didna mak muckle mair ceremony than a Hielandman wi' a roebuck...

Far and wide was Sir Robert hated and feared. Men thought he had a direct compact with Satan—that he was proof against steel—and that bullets happed aff his buff-coat like hailstones from a hearth—that he had a mear that would turn a hare on the side of Carrifra-gawns—and muckle to the same purpose, of whilk mair anon. The best blessing they wared on him was, 'Deil scowp wi' Redgauntlet!' He wasna a bad master to his ain folk, though, and was weel aneugh liked by his tenants; and as for the lackies and troopers that raid out wi' him to the persecutions, as the Whigs caa'd those killing times, they wad hae drunken themsells blind to his health at any time.

Understanding questions:

1. What sort of man is Sir Robert Redgauntlet?
  - A) Friendly and kind
  - B) Cowardly and scared
  - C) Violent and wild
2. Who are counted as 'his ain folk'?

Discussion questions:

- Different people have different opinions of Redgauntlet. Why do you think this is?
- Why do you think people act differently amongst different people? Why might someone be liked by some people and not others?

Scots:

Write down six Scots words from the passage. If you do not know what they mean, look them up in the dictionary of Scots ([Dictionaries of the Scots Language \(dsl.ac.uk\)](http://dictionaries.dsl.ac.uk)) and write down your own definition.

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## A Scottish Tale

*Redgauntlet is a landowner and is referred to as master. As the landowner, everyone living on his land has to pay him rent, but Steenie has not paid for a while. Ellipses, three dots (...), show that something has been cut out to keep the story short. In one set of ellipses we learn that Redgauntlet's butler is called Dougal.*

Now Steenie was a kind of favourite with his master, and kenn'd a' the folks about the castle, and was often sent for to play the pipes when they were at their merriment... Weel, my guidshire was nae manager—no that he was a very great misguider—but he hadna the saving gift, and he got twa terms rent in arrear.

...

Sair wark he had to get the siller; but he was weel-freended, and at last he got the haill scraped together—a thousand merks—the maist of it was from a neighbour they ca'd Laurie Lapraik—a sly tod.

...

Away trots my guidshire to Redgauntlet Castle wi' a heavy purse and a light heart, glad to be out of the Laird's danger... Dougal was glad to see Steenie, and brought him into the great oak parlour, and there sat the Laird his leesome lane, excepting that he had beside him a great, ill-favoured jack-an-ape, that was a special pet of his; a cankered beast it was, and mony an ill-natured trick it played—ill to please it was, and easily angered—ran about the haill castle, chattering and yowling, and pinching and biting folk, specially before ill weather, or disturbances in the state.

Understanding questions:

1. What is Steenie's problem with money?
  - A) He spends too much.
  - B) He isn't good at saving.
2. Where does Steenie get the money to pay his rent?
3. Is Redgauntlet's jack-a-nape (ape) friendly?

Discussion questions:

- What advice would you give Steenie for the future?
- What do you think it would be like to live with an ape?

Scots:

Draw a picture of the ape below and label it, using as many Scots words as you know.

## A Scottish Tale

*In this section, the language is old-fashioned. "Zounds" was an old exclamation that showed surprise or criticism. Notice also that it says "The Laird drew it to him" instead of "to himself" as we would say today.*

"Are ye come light-handed, ye son of a toom whistle?" said Sir Robert. "Zounds! if you are" —

My guidshire, with as gude a countenance as he could put on, made a leg, and placed the bag of money on the table wi' a dash, like a man that does something clever. The Laird drew it to him hastily—"Is it all here, Steenie, man?"

"Your honour will find it right," said my guidshire.

"Here, Dougal," said the laird, "gie Steenie a tass of brandy downstairs, till I count the siller and write the receipt."

Understanding questions:

1. What is the Laird concerned about?
2. Where will Steenie and Dougal go?
3. What will they drink?

Discussion questions:

- Steenie "placed the bag of money on the table wi' a dash, like a man that does something clever." What do you think this looked like?

Scots:

The narrator (Wandering Willie) calls his grandfather his "guidshire." Look up the word "guid" in the Dictionaries of Scots ([Dictionaries of the Scots Language \(dsl.ac.uk\)](http://DictionariesoftheScotsLanguage.dsl.ac.uk)) and look at the different meanings of this word. Use the word in as many different sentences as you can.

## A Scottish Tale

*Livery is like a uniform. In this passage, we read about the Laird's "livery-men." These are men who work for the Laird and wear his uniform. The Laird wants to drink burgundy, which is a type of wine.*

But they werena weel out of the room, when Sir Robert gied a yelloch that garr'd the castle rock. Back ran Dougal—in flew the livery-men—yell on yell gied the laird, ilk ane mair awfu' than the ither. My guidsire knew not whether to stand or flee, but he ventured back into the parlour, where a' was gaun hirdy-girdie—naebody to say 'come in,' or 'gae out.' Terribly the laird roared for cauld water to his feet, and wine to cool his throat; and Hell, hell, hell, and its flames, was aye the word in his mouth. They brought him water, and when they plunged his swoln feet into the tub, he cried out it was burning; and folk say that it *did* bubble and sparkle like a seething cauldron. He flung the cup at Dougal's head, and said he had given him blood instead of burgundy; and, sure aneugh, the lass washed clotted blood aff the carpet the neist day. The jack-an-ape they ca'd Major Weir, it jabbered and cried as if it was mocking its master; my guidsire's head was like to turn—he forgot baith siller and receipt, and down stairs he banged; but as he ran, the shrieks came faint and fainter; there was a deep-drawn shivering groan, and word gaed through the Castle, that the Laird was dead.

### Understanding questions:

1. Why do Steenie and Dougal go back into the room?
2. What happened to the water that Redgauntlet put his feet into?
3. What happened to the wine that they gave Redgauntlet?
4. What did Steenie do?

### Discussion questions:

- The story is turning into a scary story. Do you like scary stories? Why or why not?

### Scots:

Write the Scots next to their English translations:

- |                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| • gied         | • neist  |
| • hirdy-girdie | • baith  |
| • cauld        | • siller |

## A Scottish Tale

*Redgauntlet had a silver whistle. In this passage, people can hear it even though no-one is blowing it. The "foul fiend" is another name for the Devil, whom Christians believe is the enemy of humans. A bartizan is an overhanging turret.*

When midnight came, and the house was quiet as the grave, sure aneugh the silver whistle sounded as sharp and shrill as if Sir Robert was blowing it, and up got the twa auld serving-men, and tottered into the room where the dead man lay. Hutcheon saw aneugh at the first glance; for there were torches in the room, which shewed him the foul fiend, in his ain shape, sitting on the Laird's coffin! Over he cowped as if he had been dead. He couldna tell how lang he lay in a trance at the door, but when he gathered himself, he cried on his neighbour, and getting no answer, raised the house, when Dougal was found lying dead within twa steps of the bed where his master's coffin was placed. —As for the whistle, it was gaen anes and aye; but mony a time was it heard on the top of the house on the bartizan, and amang the auld chimnies and turrets, where the howlets have their nests. Sir John hushed the matter up, and the funeral passed over without mair bogle-wark.

Understanding questions:

1. What are the names of the two servants who go to find out why the silver whistle can be heard?
2. What happens to the two servants?  
A) They run away.  
B) They fall down.
3. Who dies?

Discussion question:

- The sound of the silver whistle can be heard "on the top of the house." What other sounds do you think can be heard? Describe the scene.

Scots:

According to Wikipedia, "A bogle, boggle, or bogill is a Northumbrian and Scots term for a ghost or folkloric being, used for a variety of related folkloric creatures". Look up and write down other Scots folkloric creatures.



## A Scottish Tale

*After Redgauntlet's death, his son, Sir John, inherits everything. He comes to the castle and settles in. Rapiers and broadwords are types of sword.*

But when a' was over, and the Laird was beginning to settle his affairs, every tenant was called up for his arrears, and my guidsire for the full sum that stood against him in the rental-book. Weel, away he trots to the Castle, to tell his story, and there he is introduced to Sir John, sitting in his father's chair, in deep mourning, with weepers and hanging cravat, and a small walking rapier by his side, instead of the auld broad-sword that had a hundredweight of steel about it, what with blade, chape, and basket-hilt. [... Steenie] had, while he spoke, his eye fixed on the rental-book, as if it were a mastiff-dog that he was afraid would spring up and bite him.

Understanding questions:

1. What problem does Steenie have?
2. What animal is the rent book compared to?

Discussion question:

- Why do you think the book is compared to an animal? What other things can be described as animals?

Scots:

Think and write as many words as you can to describe Sir John and Steenie.

## A Scottish Tale

After the old Redgauntlet's death, Dougal, the butler, also died. There is now nobody alive who knows that Steenie paid the money. "*Talis quails*" is a Latin term that means "such as it is."

"Stephen," said Sir John, still in the same soft, sleekit tone of voice—"Stephen Stevenson, or Steenson, ye are down here for a year's rent behind the hand—due at last term.'

*Stephen:* "Please your honour, Sir John, I paid it to your father."

*Sir John:* "Ye took a receipt, then, doubtless, Stephen; and can produce it?"

*Stephen:* 'Indeed I hadna time, please your honour; for nae sooner had I set down the siller, and just as his honour, Sir Robert, that's gaen, drew it till him to count it, and write out the receipt, he was ta'en wi' the pains that removed him."

"That was unlucky," said Sir John, after a pause. "But ye maybe paid it in the presence of somebody. I want but a *talis qualis* evidence, Stephen. I would go ower strictly to wark with no poor man."

*Stephen:* "Troth, Sir John, there was naeboddy in the room but Dougal MacCallum the butler. But, as your honour kens, he has e'en followed his auld master."

"Very unlucky again, Stephen,' said Sir John, without altering his voice a single note. "The man to whom ye paid the money is dead—and the man who witnessed the payment is dead too—and the siller, which should have been to the fore, is neither seen nor heard tell of in the repositories. How am I to believe a' this?"

Understanding questions:

1. Does Sir John believe that Steenie paid the money?
2. What does Sir John ask for?

Discussion questions:

- Sir John is described as having a "soft, sleekit tone of voice." Later, it is said that he does not change his tone at all. What do you think his voice sounds like? Can you do an impression of it?
- Notice how the dialogue is written a bit differently in this section. Why do you think this is?

Scots:

Find three Scots words that haven't been used so far. Write them down with their English translations.

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## A Scottish Tale

*Steenie rides towards his home. He stops at a change-house, which is an old-fashioned pub. The ostler-wife is the woman who looks after the horses at the pub. "Man's Enemy" is another term for the Devil.*

At last they parted, and my guidshire was to ride hame through the wood of Pitmarkie, that is a' fow of black firs, as they say.—I ken the wood, but the firs may be black or white for what I can tell.—At the entry of the wood there is a wild common, and on the edge of the common, a little lonely change-house, that was keepit then by an ostler-wife, they suld hae ca'd her Tibbie Faw, and there puir Steenie cried for a mutchkin o' brandy, for he had had no refreshment the hail day. Tibbie was earnest wi' him to take a bite of meat, but he couldna think o't, nor would he take his foot out of the stirrup, and took off the brandy wholely at twa draughts, and named a toast at each:—the first was, the memory of Sir Robert Redgauntlet, and might he never lie quiet in his grave till he had righted his poor bond-tenant; and the second was, a health to Man's Enemy, if he would but get him back the pock of siller, or tell him what came o't, for he saw the hail world was like to regard him as a thief and a cheat, and he took that waur than even the ruin of his house and hauld.

On he rode, little caring where. It was a dark night turned, and the trees made it yet darker, and he let the beast take its ain road through the wood; when, all of a sudden, from tired and wearied that it was before, the nag began to spring, and flee, and sturt, that my guidesire could hardly keep the saddle.

Understanding questions:

1. Steenie drinks a toast to two things/people. What are they?
2. What unusual thing did Steenie's horse start to do at the end of this passage?

Discussion question:

- How do you think Steenie feels during this passage? Do you think his feelings change?

Scots:

Write down two Scots words for weights or measures.

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## A Scottish Tale

*After Steenie's horse starts acting oddly, a stranger comes up to Steenie and starts talking to him.*

"If you will tell me your grief," said the stranger, "I am one that, though I have been sair miscaad in the world, am the only hand for helping my friends."

So my guidshire, to ease his ain heart, mair than from any hope of help, told him the story from beginning to end.

"It's a hard pinch," said the stranger; "but I think I can help you."

"If you could lend the money, sir, and take a lang day—I ken nae other help on earth," said my guidshire.

"But there may be some under the earth," said the stranger. "Come, I'll be frank wi' you; I could lend you the money on bond, but you would maybe scruple my terms. Now, I can tell you, that your auld Laird is disturbed in his grave by your curses, and the wailing of your family, and—if ye daur venture to go to see him, he will give you the receipt."

My guidshire's hair stood on end at this proposal, but he thought his companion might be some humoursome chield that was trying to frighten him, and might end with lending him the money. Besides, he was bauld wi' brandy, and desperate wi' distress; and he said he had courage to go to the gate of hell, and a step farther, for that receipt.—The stranger laughed.

Understanding questions:

1. What does Steenie suggest when the stranger first says he can help?
2. What does the stranger mean when he says that there may be some help "under the earth"?
3. What does Steenie say he is willing to do to get the receipt?
4. Why does he say this?

Discussion question:

- What do you think is going to happen next?

Scots:

Choose five Scots words to describe the stranger and write them below.

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## A Scottish Tale

*After Steenie and the stranger talk, Steenie and his horse continue on. In this passage ... means that some parts have been cut out. In these parts, we read the names of other people who are present.*

Weel, they rode on through the thickest of the wood, when, all of a sudden, the horse stopped at the door of a great house; and, but that he knew the place was ten miles off, my guidshire would have thought he was at Redgauntlet Castle. They rode into the outer court-yard, through the muckle faulding yetts and aneath the auld portcullis; and the whole front of the house was lighted, and there were pipes and fiddles, and as much dancing and deray within as used to be at Sir Robert's house at Pace and Yule, and such high seasons. They lap off, and my guidshire, as seemed to him, fastened his horse to the very ring he had tied him to that morning, when he gaed to wait on the young Sir John.

...

[T]here was as much singing of profane sangs, and birling of red wine, and speaking blasphemy and sculdudry, as had ever been in Redgauntlet Castle when it was at the blythest.

...

But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time; and their laughter passed into such wild sounds, as made my guidshire's very nails grow blue, and chilled the marrow in his banes.

Understanding questions:

1. Steenie arrives at a building. What does it look like?
2. How does Steenie know that the building is not the place that it looks like?
3. What is happening inside the building?

Discussion question:

- What different sounds and smells do you think there are within the building?

Scots:

Choose 3 Scots words from this passage and create a sentence for each one.

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## A Scottish Tale

*Steenie is taken inside by MacCullum, who warns him to be careful. Redgauntlet requests 'Weel hoddled, Luckie,' which is a name of a song, meaning "well danced, old woman."*

And when my guidesire came forward, Sir Robert, or his ghaist, or the deevil in his likeness, said, "Weel, piper, hae ye settled wi' my son for the year's rent?"

With much ado my guidesire gat breath to say, that Sir John would not settle without his honour's receipt.

"Ye shall hae that for a tune of the pipes, Steenie," said the appearance of Sir Robert—"Play us up "Weel hoddled, Luckie.""

...

MacCallum brought a pair of pipes might have served the piper of Donald of the Isles. But he gave my guidesire a nudge as he offered them; and looking secretly and closely, Steenie saw that the chanter was of steel, and heated to a white heat; so he had fair warning not to trust his fingers with it. So he excused himself again, and said, he was faint and frightened, and had not wind aneugh to fill the bag.

Understanding questions:

1. What does Redgauntlet want Steenie to do?
2. Why does Steenie not do this?

Discussion question:

- The passage says that the person in the house is Redgauntlet, or his ghost, or the devil. Why do you think this is? What one do you think is most likely?

Scots:

Use Scots to write a sentence describing how Steenie feels at this point.

## A Scottish Tale

*This passage refers to the Earl of Douglas, who invited the king's messenger to dinner at Threave's Castle. While they were eating, MacLellan was executed.*

"Then ye maun eat and drink, Steenie," said the figure; 'for we do little else here; and it's ill speaking between a fou man and a fasting."

Now these were the very words that the bloody Earl of Douglas said to keep the King's messenger in hand, while he cut the head off MacLellan of Bombie, at the Threave Castle; and that put Steenie mair and mair on his guard. So he spoke up like a man, and said he came neither to eat, or drink or make minstrelsy; but simply for his ain—to ken what was come o' the money he had paid, and to get a discharge for it; and he was so stout-hearted by this time, that he charged Sir Robert for conscience-sake (he had no power to say the holy name)—and as he hoped for peace and rest, to spread no snares for him, but just to give him his ain.

The appearance gnashed its teeth and laughed, but it took from a large pocket-book the receipt, and handed it to Steenie. "There is your receipt, ye pitiful cur; and for the money, my dog-whelp of a son may go look for it in the Cat's Cradle."

Understanding questions:

1. What does Redgauntlet invite Steenie to do?
2. Why does Steenie not do this?

Discussion question:

- Redgauntlet calls Steenie "a pitiful cur," and refers to his own son as a "dog-whelp." However, he is still helpful. Why do you think this is?

Scots:

Find three Scots words in the passage and find their English translations. Write them below:

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- 
-

## A Scottish Tale

*On the previous page, Steenie cannot say the word "God," but he manages to say it this time.*

My guidshire uttered mony thanks, and was about to retire, when Sir Robert roared aloud, "Stop, though, thou sack-doudling son of a whore! I am not done with thee. HERE we do nothing for nothing; and you must return on this very day twelvemonth, to pay your master the homage that you owe me for my protection."

My father's tongue was loosed of a suddenty, and he said aloud, "I refer mysell to God's pleasure, and not to yours."

He had no sooner uttered the word than all was dark around him; and he sank on the earth with such a sudden shock, that he lost both breath and sense.

How lang Steenie lay there, he could not tell; but when he came to himsell, he was lying in the auld kirkyard of Redgauntlet parishine, just at the door of the family aisle, and the scutcheon of the auld knight, Sir Robert, hanging over his head. There was a deep morning fog on grass and gravestone around him, and his horse was feeding quietly beside the minister's twa cows. Steenie would have thought the whole was a dream, but he had the receipt in his hand, fairly written and signed by the auld Laird; only the last letters of his name were a little disorderly, written like one seized with sudden pain.

Understanding question:

1. What does Redgauntlet tell Steenie to do?
2. Will Steenie do this?
3. What happens after Steenie says that he refers himself to God's pleasure?
4. How does he know it is not a dream?

Discussion questions:

- Do you know any other stories in which people are not sure whether what happened was a dream? Why do you think these stories are popular?

Scots:

Use Scots to write a sentence describing how Steenie feels at the end of this passage.



## A Scottish Tale

*The action in this passage takes place the morning after Steenie's adventure.*

Sorely troubled in his mind, he left that dreary place, rode through the mist to Redgauntlet Castle, and with much ado he got speech of the Laird.

"Well, you dyvour bankrupt," was the first word, "have you brought me my rent?"

"No," answered my guidshire, "I have not; but I have brought your honour Sir Robert's receipt for it."

"How, sirrah?—Sir Robert's receipt!—You told me he had not given you one."

"Will your honour please to see if that bit line is right?"

Sir John looked at every line, and at every letter, with much attention; and at last, at the date, which my guidshire had not observed,—*"From my appointed place,"* he read, *"this twenty-fifth November."*—*"What! That is yesterday!—Villain, thou must have gone to hell for this!"*

"I got it from your honour's father—whether he be in heaven or hell, I know not," said Steenie.

Understanding questions:

1. Where does Steenie go?
2. Why is Sir John shocked by the receipt?

Discussion question:

- How do you think Sir John is going to react next?

Scots:

Write down three Scots words to describe Sir John's feelings:

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- 
-

## A Scottish Tale

*In Scots law, "lease-making" meant untrue and slanderous statements that might damage the relationship between the king and the people. It was originally punished by death, having a red-hot iron driven through one's tongue.*

"I will delate you for a warlock to the Privy Council!" said Sir John. "I will send you to your master, the Devil, with the help of a tar-barrel and a torch!"

"I intend to delate mysell to the Presbytery," said Steenie, "and tell them all I have seen last night, whilk are things fitter for them to judge of than a borrel man like me."

Sir John paused, composed himsell, and desired to hear the full history; and my guidshire told it him from point to point, as I have told it you—word for word, neither more nor less.

Sir John was silent again for a long time, and at last he said, very composedly, "Steenie, this story of yours concerns the honour of many a noble family besides mine; and if it be a leasing-making, to keep yourself out of my danger, the least you can expect is to have a red-hot iron driven through your tongue, and that will be as bad as scauding your fingers wi' a red-hot chaunter. But yet it may be true, Steenie; and if the money cast up, I will not know what to think of it.—But where shall we find the Cat's Cradle? There are cats enow about the old house, but I think they kitten without the ceremony of bed or cradle."

Understanding question:

1. Does Sir John believe Steenie's story?
2. Why does Sir John want to go to the Cat's Cradle?
3. Does Sir John know where the Cat's Cradle is?

Discussion question:

- If you were Sir John's friend, would you advise him to believe Steenie or not? Why or why not?

Scots:

Write down your five favourite Scots words from the story so far:

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-

## A Scottish Tale

*One of the servants says that the Cat's Cradle is an old turret, so they go there. In this section, Sir John refers to himself as master. This was a term that was used to refer to lairds and other people in positions of authority.*

It was a dangerous place to climb, for the ladder was auld and frail, and wanted ane or twa rounds. However, up got Sir John, and entered at the narrow door, where his body stopped the only little light that was in the bit turret. Something flees at him wi' a vengeance—maist dang him back ower—bang gaed the knight's pistol, and Hutcheon, that held the ladder, and my guidesire that stood beside him, hears a loud skelloch. A minute after, Sir John flings the body of the jack-an-ape down to them, and cries that the siller is fund, and that they should come up and help him. And there was the bag of siller sure aneugh, and mony orra thing besides, that had been missing for mony a day. And Sir John, when he had ripped the turret weel, led my guidesire into the dining-parlour, and took him by the hand and spoke kindly to him, and said he was sorry he should have doubted his word, and that he would hereafter be a good master to him to make amends.

Understanding questions:

1. Was it easy to get to the Cat's Cradle?
2. What attacks Sir John in the Cat's Cradle?
3. Does Sir John find the money?

Discussion question:

- This is the end of the story. How do you think Steenie and Sir John will change in the future, if at all?


Scots:

Write down all the Scots words you can find in this passage.





Here's the silver!



Have a brandy  
while I count!




Aaaaahhhhhh!










I drink to Redgauntlet  
(may he not rest in his  
grave) and to the devil!



My life is so hard. Let me tell you my whole story.


You should try visiting the afterlife.



**But their smiles were fearfully contorted...**








Fine! Here's your receipt. But come back in a year.

I'll do what God says, not you!








Here's my receipt!

**This was dated  
yesterday, you  
liar!**

**And your father  
said the money is in  
the Cat's Cradle!**



I found it! You were right! I am going to be a much better person now!